

Achievements of Ancient China

BEFORE YOU READ

Reach Into Your Background

What will future historians call the time we live in? Will they

think it was a great age? Will they praise its scientific advances, such as the computer and space flight? What do you think?

2. What important advances in technology were made in China during the Han dynasty?

Key Terms

silk

Key People and Places

Sima Qian
Silk Road

Questions to Explore

1. What role did Confucianism play in China during the Han dynasty?

▼ Camels are undoubtedly better equipped than humans to endure a sandstorm. Double rows of protective eyelashes and the ability to close their nostrils help them survive sandstorms.

The caravan slowly plods across the hot sand of the Takla Makan Desert. Weary travelers wearing long robes sway on top of camels. Riderless camels are heaped high with heavy loads.

Suddenly, the camels stop, huddle together, and snarl viciously. An old man riding the lead camel turns around and shouts. No one can hear him because the screaming wind drowns out his words. The man jumps from his camel and quickly wraps a strip of felt around his nose and mouth. The other travelers rush to dismount and cover their faces, too. Just then, the sandstorm hits with full force.

Then, as quickly as it came, the sandstorm is gone. The travelers wipe sand from their eyes and tend to their camels. They have survived just one of the many challenges of traveling on the long and treacherous trade route known as the Silk Road.

